

Sailor craves applause

1st RTBn. corpsman set to sing alongside Sun City natives ‘on the way to the Forum’

LANCE CPL. BRIAN KESTER
STAFF WRITER

Seaman Michael Hicks, 1st RTBn. Aid Station corpsman, and his wife, Melyssa, are acting in the Sun City Hilton Head production of “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum.”

A dress rehearsal will take place at Pinckney Hall at 7 p.m., Wednesday, and is free and open to military personnel and their families.

The Romanesque comedy is Hicks’ fourth theatrical performance since arriving to Parris Island. His love for the theater grew from an early age as he performed in his first play at the age of 5. Years later, with the love still alive, after a short interruption to acclimate

to married and military life, Hicks made a decision to reconnect with his 15-year passion for acting.

“When I got this shore command and my wife moved here with me, we got wind of a community theater that was holding auditions,” said Hicks.

Through that and other auditions in the local theaters, Hicks began the journey to this current project.

“The Sun City Community Theater is usually reserved for people who are from Sun City,” he said. “They were auditioning for two younger [people] for the show so they auditioned out in town for the part.”

Hicks and his wife auditioned and were cast in the roles of Hero and Philia. Being in the play means a lot of extracurricular responsibility,

Based on the Broadway musical comedy which was freely adapted from the works of Plautus, this farce set in ancient Rome follows slave and scam-artist Pseudolus as he attempts to win his freedom by brokering the sale of a virgin. This comedy is considered the predecessor to the films by both Monty Python and Mel Brooks.

in addition to accomplishing the mission of military life.

“Since they are a retirement village, they tend to rehearse a little bit earlier in the day,” said Hicks. “So, if I can’t make it, that’s no big deal. But if I can, I tell my command that they are rehearsing, and ask if it is OK if

I leave a little bit early. They have been very [accommodating] about that.”

Having the support of the Navy has been a huge boost for the couple.

“I didn’t know the military would support that kind of thing, but they have been very

supportive and great about giving him as much time as they can,” said Melyssa. “His command and co-workers have been very encouraging of his interest in theater.”

Not only does he have the support of his command, but he also has outside support, which is a constant source of inspiration.

“The community has been really receptive as far as me being in the military,” said Hicks. “They work around my schedule, as my command works around their schedule. At two of the plays I have been involved in, they have offered a free showing to any military personnel.”

With the backing of the military and the community, the most important support Hicks required was from his wife.

“We don’t get to spend a lot of time together,” said Hicks. “She works second shift and I work first shift. I am at work from 6:15 a.m. until 3 or 4 p.m., she doesn’t get off until 6 p.m. So, this has been great. We get time to spend together on stage playing opposite each other. We have played opposite each other in the last three plays where I play the leading male and she plays the leading female, so it has been nice.”

Anyone planning to attend the dress rehearsal should call George Weyhrich at 705-5696 for reservations. The final performances are scheduled for Feb. 26, 27 and 28, with seating priced at \$15, \$13 and \$8. For more information and reservations for the performances, call Sharon Walker at 705-3919.



Lance Cpl. Brian Kester

TRICARE to issue certificate of credible coverage

New paper will make changing health insurance after leaving the service a more seamless process

LINDA SEIGLER
NHB MANAGED CARE DEPARTMENT

As of Feb. 1, the Department of Defense Military Health System began automatically issuing a Certificate of Creditable Coverage to any former uniformed services sponsor or any family member who loses eligibility for health care benefits under TRICARE.

Who will receive a Certificate of Creditable Coverage?

Any former military sponsor or family member whose eligibility for TRICARE ends as a result of the sponsor’s separation from active duty status, divorce, demobilization if the sponsor is a member of the National Guard or Reserves, or a dependent child reaching age 21 (or 23 for a full-time college student).

What is a Certificate of Creditable Coverage?

According to Mr. Paul Marcinko, Naval Hospital Beaufort Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 Privacy Officer, “The certificate is written

proof of prior healthcare coverage. When you leave the military and accept a job offer and choose to purchase other insurance, the other insurance plan may ask for a Certificate of Creditable Coverage to show that you had prior healthcare coverage.

The certificate provides proof of TRICARE coverage for the period of time noted on the certificate.

Health plans use the certificate to show prior coverage and to reduce the period of time that you might otherwise be excluded from coverage for a pre-existing condition.”

Why would I need a Certificate of Creditable Coverage?

A healthcare plan can refuse

to pay for healthcare for conditions you had prior to being covered by that plan. Plans may refuse to cover you for these pre-existing conditions for a set period of time (for instance, they may say they will not cover you for your high blood pressure for six months), unless you can prove that you had coverage for your condition prior to enrolling in their plan.

A Certificate of Creditable Coverage is the document that proves you had previous healthcare coverage.

How do I get a Certificate of Creditable Coverage?

The Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office, as custodian of the Defense

Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, will mail a certificate for the sponsor or family member within five to 10 days after eligibility expires.

The certificate will be mailed to the address on file in DEERS, which is why it is important for everyone to ensure their DEERS information is updated.

Sponsors or family members, who need their certificate sooner, may mail or fax a request to the DSO.

The request should include the sponsor’s name and Social Security number, name of family member(s) for whom the certificate is needed, reason for the urgent request, name and address of the person or organization where the certificate should be sent, and

the signature of the requester.

Where do I send my request?

The DSO fax number is: (831) 655-8317; the address is: Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office (DSO), Attn: Certificate of Creditable Coverage, 400 Gigling Road, Seaside, CA 93955-6771.

Where can I get assistance with this?

Sponsors or family members who have questions regarding the certificate may contact the DSO at (800) 538-9552, or TTY/TDD at (866) 363-2883.

Additional information is also available on the TRI-CARE Web site located at www.tricare.osd.mil/certificate/index.cfm.

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the Tri-Command area. At Parris Island alone, we gave more than \$200,000.”

The donations made to the society and the recent celebrations of its 100th birthday are both testaments to the society’s resourcefulness and longevity in helping service members, said Grindle.

“[The NMCRS turning 100] may not have a big imprint on the Tri-Command area but on the major bases it will have a lasting affect,” said Capt. Melanie R. Hudson, Depot Adjutant and Tri-Command coordinator of the fund drive.

That 100-year history started in 1820 when Commodore Isaac Hull, commander of the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston, proposed the formation of “A society, to be composed of the Navy and Marine Corps, for the relief and support of the widows

and families of officers who may be killed in battle or die while in service.”

According to the NMCRS’s history, the idea was not acted on until 1903 when Dr. J. William White of the University of Pennsylvania suggested sharing the funds from the Army-Navy game.

With the approval of President Theodore Roosevelt, the proceeds were split between the university, as hosts of the game, the Army Relief Society and the Navy for the purpose of establishing their relief society.

“One hundred years later, we still do the same thing, but we do a whole lot more,” said Grindle. “Our express goal is to provide emergency assistance for Navy and Marine Corps personnel.”

For more information, contact the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society on Parris Island at 228-3512.

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